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## A NEW NAME FOR THE CHERRY TOMATO (*LYCOPERSICON*—*SOLANACEAE*)

***Lycopersicon esculentum* var. *leptophyllum* (Dun.) D'Arcy, comb. nov.**

*Lycopersicum cerasiforme* Dun., *Hist. Sol.* 113. 1813.

*L. humboldtii* Dun., *Hist. Sol.* 112. 1813.

*L. cerasiforme* var.  $\gamma$  *leptophyllum* Dun. in DC., *Prodr.* 13(2): 26. 1852. LECTOTYPE: ?Nepal, Wallich exsicc. 2611 (G-DC, not seen; microfiche, MO).

*L. esculentum* var. *cerasiforme* (Dun.) A. Gray, *Syn. Fl.*, ed. 2. 2: 226. 1886.

This new combination is made in preparation for the treatment of the Solanaceae in the Flora of Dominica which is to be issued under the guidance of Dr. D. H. Nicolson, Smithsonian Institution. The plant under consideration is the Cherry Tomato, which is widely cultivated and is spontaneous in warm countries.

Variety *cerasiforme*, which is the currently used varietal name for the Cherry Tomato variety, is antedated at varietal rank by var. *leptophyllum* of 1852. Dunal used infraspecific names in his treatment of the Solanaceae for the de Candolle Prodr. 13(2), but he did not specify the intended rank. Accepted practice has considered these names as varieties. For example, Fernald (1900: 560) referred to *Solanum torvum* var. *ochraceo-ferrugineum* Dun. (*Prodr.* 260); Goodspeed (1954: 372) referred to Dunal's names under *Nicotiana tabacum* L. (*Prodr.* 556) as varieties; and Francey (1935: 126, 287, etc.) similarly referred to Dunal's names under species of *Cestrum* (*Prodr.* 601, 604, etc.) as varieties.

Schubert (1975) and Nicolson (1975) recently argued that the correct name for the tomato should be *Lycopersicon lycopersicum* (L.) Karst. rather than *L. esculentum* Mill., which has been traditional throughout much of this century. The issue revolves around how strictly tautonyms should be construed. Terrill (1977) argues that since the combination *Lycopersicon lycopersicum* was intended as a tautonym (and did take that form when first made) it should be so treated, and then *Lycopersicon esculentum* remains the correct name. Terrill



has proposed an adjustment to the Code which would clarify this issue and result in the continued use of *Lycopersicon esculentum*.

At issue is not only the logical purity of the Code versus pragmatic application, but the reputation of the taxonomic community among a significant part of the botanically interested public it seeks to serve. Thus I quote a recent letter from Charles M. Rick, a well-respected student of the genus *Lycopersicon*: "I have no useful comments to make in the matter of *L. esculentum* vs. *L. lycopersicum*. When taxonomists themselves are in such disagreement on this point, it is a pity that such a trivial historical quirk might result in great turmoil. Many tomato researchers are concerned that the change will cause great confusion and that the new name would be adopted with great irregularity (witness the continued usage of *Solanum lycopersicum*!). I can scarcely believe that the gain from a strict interpretation of the code would be worth all the confusion and agony that it will generate." Persistent use of the name *Vinca rosea* by growers in flagrant disregard of the correct name, *Catharanthus roseus*, is another example of taxonomists being unable to assert leadership over a skeptical public.

William T. Stearn once remarked to me that the greatest source of name changes is legislation: that is, changes in the Code which attempt to clarify one issue but which lead to changes in other names not under consideration at the time. Perhaps there is a limit as to how perfect the Code should be in terms of logical purity. Otherwise we are always burning the haystack to find the needle. It will be unpopular enough among the wide botanical community to substitute the name *leptophyllum* for the traditional var. *cerasiforme*; at least this is based on the long-standing principle of priority which can receive a sympathetic hearing when explained. Reinstatement of the name *L. lycopersicum* for *L. esculentum* after three-quarters of a century of use is entirely the result of legislative juggling, and the basic principles involved, if there are any, will be difficult to relate to others not directly involved in this series of Code manipulations.

In hopes that the taxonomic community will heed the practical and still logical arguments of Terrill and support his proposal or one much like it, the above combination is made under *L. esculentum* rather than under *L. lycopersicum*.

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